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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: MARR MOPS KPKO PREL UG

SUBJECT: UGANDA REQUESTS ACOTA SUPPORT FOR SOMALIA BOUND PEACEKEEPERS

**¶1.** (U) Summary: Senior Ugandan military leaders and African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) Program officials met in Kampala 9-10 February 2007, to discuss the possibility of ACOTA peace support operations (PSO) training and equipping support for Uganda. The Ugandans stressed the critical need for training to prepare Ugandan military (UPDF) units for deployment to peacekeeping duties in Somalia, and requested ACOTA assistance. Specifically, the Ugandan officials requested ACOTA training and equipment be provided for the contingent of peacekeepers that will replace the UPDF peacekeeping contingent now preparing for immediate deployment to Somalia. End Summary.

**¶2.** (SBU) During 9-10 February 2007, a team from the Department of State's ACOTA Program Office met with Uganda Ministry of Defense Permanent Secretary Brigadier Noble Mayombo and Joint Chief of Staff Brigadier Robert Rusoke, to discuss the possibility of ACOTA PSO training and equipment support for Somalia-bound Ugandan peacekeepers. Brigadier Mayombo welcomed the ACOTA team by stating, "We consider the U.S. to be a very close partner and Uganda supports this program (ACOTA)." He went on to state, "We need training for our troops going to Somalia," and specifically requested ACOTA PSO training for the, "next Ugandan contingent going to Somalia," meaning the approximately 1500 UPDF troops who will replace the Ugandan contingent poised to deploy to Somalia within days. Brigadier Rusoke stated, "We are ready to begin planning for ACOTA training now." Rusoke requested that ACOTA and Ugandan planners commence detailed planning for ACOTA training and equipping activities within weeks (late February-early March 2007).

**¶3.** (U) In 1997, Uganda became one of the earliest partners of the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), the precursor program to the ACOTA program. Since late 1998, there have been no ACOTA training and equipping activities with Uganda. Now poised to provide a key military leadership and troop contribution to the prospective multinational peacekeeping operation in Somalia, Uganda clearly desires to resume ACOTA PSO training and equipping support of UPDF peacekeepers.

**¶4.** (SBU) Brigadier Mayombo stated that the first replacement contingent of Ugandan peacekeepers for Somalia should be ready to deploy within six months. In this context, he requested ACOTA training for approximately 1500 Ugandan peacekeepers, to include PSO command and staff training for a brigade-level force headquarters staff as well as both PSO command and staff and PSO soldier skills field training for two battalions. The Ugandan officers and the ACOTA team agreed to move forward with detailed planning for ACOTA PSO training for Uganda's Somalia-bound peacekeepers. While the initial focus for near-term ACOTA training and equipping activities will be preparing UPDF peacekeepers for peace support operations in Somalia, Brigadiers Mayombo and Rusoke clearly welcomed the opportunity a long-term ACOTA partnership presents for establishing a UPDF cadre of trained trainers that will provide a training sustainment capacity for future peacekeeping preparation.

**¶5.** Comment: Post fully supports the resumption of the ACOTA program for the UPDF.

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